

CLAIMS

The invention claimed is:

1. A belt comprising:

a hanger portion having a horizontal length and a cross-sectional thickness; and

a hinge portion including having a first section disposed at an angle A1 relative to said hanger portion, and a second section disposed at an angle at least approximately 180 degrees relative to a longitudinal axis of said first section, wherein said second section of said hinge portion is sized and shaped to fit around at least a portion of said hanger portion.

2. The belt as claimed in claim 1 wherein said hanger portion includes a substantially horizontal section.

3. The belt as claimed in claim 1 wherein said hanger portion includes a substantially "U" shape.

4. The belt as claimed in claim 1 wherein said hanger portion includes a substantially "V" shape.

5. The belt as claimed in claim 1 wherein said hanger portion includes a substantially trapezoidal shape.

6. The belt as claimed in claim 1 wherein at least a portion of said second section is disposed a distance D from said first section wherein said distance D is less than said cross-sectional thickness of said hanger portion.

7. The belt as claimed in claim 1 wherein said first section includes a first and a second transverse leg disposed at said angle A1 relative to said hanger portion.

8. The belt as claimed in claim 1 wherein said second section of said hinge portion extends beyond a transverse axis of said hanger portion.

9. The belt as claimed in claim 7 wherein said angle A1 is approximately 90 degrees.

10. The belt as claimed in claim 7 wherein said second section further includes a first and a second loop each disposed at an angle greater than approximately 180 degrees relative to said longitudinal axis of said first section.

11. The belt as claimed in claim 10 wherein said first and said second loop are separated by a "V" shaped section.

12. The belt as claimed in claim 10 wherein said first and said second loop are separated by a "U" shaped section.

13. The belt as claimed in claim 1 wherein said hinge section includes a "W" shape.

14. The belt as claimed in claim 1 wherein said belt further includes an angle A3 with respect to a longitudinal axis of said belt disposed between said hanger portion and said hinge portion such that said belt includes a substantially flat carrying surface.

15. The belt as claimed in claim 1 wherein said belt further includes a plurality of links each having a bent portion disposed between said hanger portion and said hinge portion such that a hanger and a hinge portion of a first link is disposed in substantially the same plane as a hanger and a hinge portion of an adjacent link, respectively.

16. The belt as claimed in claim 15 wherein said bent portion is sized and shaped such that said hanger portion is disposed in a plane which is approximately one wire diameter from a plane that said hinge portion is disposed.

17. A belt comprising:

a hanger portion having a horizontal length and a cross-sectional thickness; and

a hinge portion having a first section disposed at an angle A1 relative to a longitudinal axis of said hanger portion and a second section having at least a portion disposed at an angle A2 relative to said first section and a distance D from said first section, wherein said second section of said hinge portion is sized and shaped to fit around at least a portion of said hanger portion, and wherein said angle A2 is large enough such that said distance D is smaller than said cross-sectional thickness of said hanger portion.

18. The belt as claimed in claim 17 wherein said hanger portion includes a substantially horizontal section.

19. The belt as claimed in claim 17 wherein said hanger portion includes a substantially "U" shape.

20. The belt as claimed in claim 17 wherein said hanger portion includes a substantially "V" shape.

21. The belt as claimed in claim 17 wherein said hanger portion includes a substantially trapezoidal shape.

22. The belt as claimed in claim 17 wherein said first section includes a first and a second transverse leg disposed at said angle A1 relative to said hanger portion.

23. The belt as claimed in claim 17 wherein said second section of said hinge portion extends beyond a transverse axis of said hanger portion.

24. The belt as claimed in claim 22 wherein said angle A1 is approximately 90 degrees.

25. The belt as claimed in claim 22 wherein said second section further includes a first and a second loop each disposed at an angle greater than approximately 180 degrees relative to said longitudinal axis of said first section.

26. The belt as claimed in claim 25 wherein said first and said second loop are separated by a "V" shaped section.

27. The belt as claimed in claim 25 wherein said first and said second loop are separated by a "U" shaped section.

28. The belt as claimed in claim 17 wherein said hinge section includes a "W" shape.

29. The belt as claimed in claim 17 wherein said belt further includes an angle A3 with respect to a longitudinal axis of said belt disposed between said hanger portion and said hinge portion such that said belt includes a substantially flat carrying surface.

30. The belt as claimed in claim 17 wherein said belt further includes a plurality of links each having a bent portion disposed between said hanger portion and said hinge portion such that a hanger and a hinge portion of a first link is disposed in substantially the same plane as a hanger and a hinge portion of an adjacent link, respectively.

31. The belt as claimed in claim 30 wherein said bent portion is sized and shaped such that said hanger portion is disposed in a plane which is approximately one wire diameter from a plane that said hinge portion is disposed.

32. A wire belt comprising a first and at least a second link each including a hanger portion and a hinge portion, said hinge portion having a first section disposed at an angle A1 relative to a longitudinal axis of said hanger portion and a second section having at least a portion disposed at an angle A2 relative to said first section and a distance D from said first section, wherein said second section of said hinge portion of said first link is sized and shaped to fit around at least a portion of said hanger portion of said at least a second link such that said first and said second link are rotatably disposed with respect to each other without the use of a rod.

33. The wire belt as claimed in claim 32 wherein said angle A2 is large enough such that said distance D is smaller than said cross-sectional thickness of said hanger portion of said second link.

34. The wire belt as claimed in claim 32 wherein said hanger portion includes a substantially horizontal section.

35. The belt as claimed in claim 32 wherein said hanger portion includes a substantially "U" shape.

36. The belt as claimed in claim 32 wherein said hanger portion includes a substantially "V" shape.

37. The belt as claimed in claim 32 wherein said hanger portion includes a substantially trapezoidal shape.

38. The wire belt as claimed in claim 32 wherein said first section includes a first and a second transverse leg disposed at said angle A1 relative to said hanger portion.

39. The wire belt as claimed in claim 32 wherein said second section of said hinge portion extends beyond a transverse axis of said hanger portion.

40. The wire belt as claimed in claim 32 wherein said angle A1 is approximately 90 degrees.

41. The wire belt as claimed in claim 32 wherein said second section further includes a first and a second loop each disposed at an angle greater than approximately 180 degrees relative to said longitudinal axis of said first section.

42. The wire belt as claimed in claim 41 wherein said first and said second loop are separated by a "V" shaped section.

43. The wire belt as claimed in claim 41 wherein said first and said second loop are separated by a "U" shaped section.

44. The wire belt as claimed in claim 32 wherein said hinge section includes a "W" shape.

45. The wire belt as claimed in claim 32 wherein the distance between said first and said second transverse leg is between about 1/8 to about 0.75 inches (about 6.35 to about 12.7 mm) and wherein said length of said first and said second transverse leg is between about 1/8 to about 0.75 inches (about 3.175 to about 19.05 mm).

46. The wire belt as claimed in claim 32 wherein said wire belt further includes an angle A3 with respect to a longitudinal axis of said belt disposed between said hanger portion and said hinge portion such that said wire belt includes a substantially flat carrying surface.

47. The wire belt as claimed in claim 32 wherein said wire belt further a plurality of links each having a bent portion disposed between said hanger portion and said hinge portion such that a hanger and a hinge portion of a first link is disposed in substantially the same plane as a hanger and a hinge portion of an adjacent link, respectively.

48. The wire belt as claimed in claim 47 wherein said bent portion is sized and shaped such that said hanger portion is disposed in a plane which is approximately one wire diameter from a plane that said hinge portion is disposed.

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